**FIAE Chapter Responses**

**Chapter 1**

In general, this chapter talked about differentiated instruction; it explained many ways on how teachers teach and conduct their classrooms. It explained how some arrange their rooms, present materials, discipline, test, and whether or not there should be projects or lectures. All of these things seem to be something each teacher must decide when they enter the classroom. Right now, I honestly cannot say my exact teaching style and how I will test, discipline, and teach. I still have much to learn and have a lot of time to learn it. I will most likely learn new information and philosophies from now until graduation that will most likely change some of my current thoughts about teaching. I have always been rather moldable and open minded. But if I had to teach a class today, I would most likely form my classroom in a U shape we had our tables originally. Most of my classes will probably be discussion based because I find it is rather easy to work discussions into a social studies and history class. I want all my students to be able to easily see their classmates when they are talking to one and other. It also allows for better group work because students can sit on either side of the U and work together. My teaching style will most likely be rather lax; I don’t foresee myself being a totalitarian teacher. I want all of my students to feel comfortable asking me questions and talking in my class.

**Chapter 2**

This chapter talked mainly about mastery of material. One major point that is brought up was that there is a difference between memorization and mastery. One can only regurgitate information without fully understanding it when they memorize information; mastery requires the understanding of the information. If you ask me, information is almost completely useless if you don’t know what it truly means. According to Grant Wiggins, for one to truly understand something, a student will have the ability to explain, determine, apply, and be able to use empathy and self-knowledge. If this can be done, then a student has mastered what they have learned. They know how and where to apply knowledge. This is the primary goal of every teacher in my opinion. Every teacher must have a want or need to have all of their students master the material they are teaching them. One of the best ways to get a student to buy into what you are teaching them, therefore want to master it, is to show them how it applies to the real world. For social studies, it is rather difficult to answer such a question, but possible. If I was teaching a psychology class, I would say you will use this to figure out how others think and rationalize decisions in the real world. For a normal history class, you can use the old slogan “history repeats itself.” If one doesn’t fully understand history, then history will continue to repeat itself; for better or for worse.

**Chapter 3**

Personally, I really enjoyed the analogy at the beginning of this chapter. When you look at something from multiple different angles, then it looks like multiple different things. In the analogy, half a class looked a picture by focusing on one spot and saw an old woman. Then another half of the class looked at the same picture but focusing on a different spot and saw a young woman. This analogy plays beautifully into assessment. When it comes to assessment, you can see different things when you look at different assessments, just like when these people looked at different parts of a picture. This is why you can’t just look at one piece of assessment. You need to look at multiple, and see them as a photo album rather than a snap shot like chapter 5 in UBD explained. But another major factor is that you need to vary assessment. If you use the same kind assessment, you may see some kids succeed even though they don’t really understand the material they are being tested on. For example, I am very good at reasoning when it comes to multiple choice answers. There have been some tests that are only multiple choice questions that I have gotten around a 90% on even though I knew none of the material on the test. This because I can normally reason my way down to 2 answers, and from there I could logically get an answer based on what I vaguely remember. This kind of test really didn’t truly tell how well I really knew the information, because I would have failed some solely multiple choice tests I have taken if they were open ended.

**Chapter 4**

This chapter referred to three different kinds of assessment: portfolio’s, rubrics, and self-assessment. I feel that all of these can and should be used in all subject areas as they all provide certain things that not much else does. I personally really like the idea of portfolios. Portfolios are compilations of student work done throughout a certain period of time, that be a semester, and school year, or even multiple years. I really like it because it shows off student achievement. I remember enjoying looking back at portfolios in high school when we were done with them. It was nice to see that I actually accomplished a lot of work throughout the semester, and some pieces of work reminded me of some fun memories I had in that class or what was going on in my life at the time I did it. Yes, not all materials will be very nostalgic, but it is a very good tool for teachers and students alike. They both can use it to track their/the student’s progress. One can track improvement by looking back at old work, and portfolios put all of the work in the same spot for easy reference. The other two things, rubrics and self-assessment, are both things that almost every single class I have taken had. They are nice additions to classes, but at this point I almost expect them. Rubrics are necessary so students know exactly what is expected of them, and self-assessment will foster future growth of a student.

**Chapter 5**

This chapter talked about tiering. Tiering is defined as how teachers adjust their assignments and assessments based on students’ readiness levels, interest in the class, and learner profiles. In general, tiering is used to make a class harder or easier for a student who is either bored by the content they already know or struggling because the content is too complex for them at the moment. Teachers can do this by scaling the work, either subtly or drastically. In some cases, drastic tiering has to happen, and then they slowly bring the complexity back up as the student begins to understand the materials. This can be a very difficult task. You want to be able to give all students the challenge that is appropriate for them, but you don’t want to make a social hierarchy in the classroom; that is, you don’t want to separate the class into the, “smart kids,” and the, “dumb kids.” If this mentality is taken by your students, you have done tiering incorrectly in my opinion. You want all of your students to feel as equals, not smarter or dumber than other student, whether or not they may actually be. This is what makes tiering a challenge in schools, because it is very hard to avoid this. I have had a couple of teacher do tiering in the classroom (before I actually knew the official name of it), and some students in the group that needed help felt they were dumber than the rest of their classmates and openly expressed it. This is what you want to avoid when it comes to tiering.

**Chapter 6**

This chapter talked about how to make good test questions. This is an extremely valuable thing for all teachers to know. Without the proper test questions, then a student will not be assessed correctly. This chapter included quite a bit of information that seemed rather general and unnecessary to be reiterated to me at least, but some of it was rather new and interesting to think about. I had never really thought about the efficiency factor when I was taking tests in school Looking back, I do remember teachers who had T’s and F’s to circle for their true and false questions and those that didn’t. I never really thought about it, but circling the letters makes it some much easier on the teacher while having little to no impact to how the student actually takes the test. Now teachers don’t have to guess whether or not a letter is and F or a T, they will know right away. One of the things that I will find hard is figuring out ways to make some of my questions more enjoyable. Social studies doesn’t have very many questions where I can add a student’s name and interest like some math examples they gave us. I can use students name when describing a kind of person in a vocabulary word, but other than that I can’t think of much. One thing I really liked was something professor Melcher did last semester in my political science class. He added little funny pictures that were jokes or vaguely had something to do with the content all around the test to be funny and keep our interest. That could be something I can do.